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REMARKS

Claims 1-29 remain in this application. Claim 2 has been canceled. Claims 13 through 29 have been added. Claims 13 through 20 are copied verbatim from US 6,379,190 B1, and claims 21 through 28 are copied substantially from that patent.

Cross-reference to a related application by the same inventor, filed on the same day as the instant application, has been added. No new matter has been added.

AMENDMENT TO SPECIFICATION

The paragraph beginning on page 4, line 13 to page 5, line 5, has been amended because of an obvious typographical error incorrectly referring to "prongs" (212) as "sockets." Page 5, line 1. The error is obvious and the amendment presents no new matter.

RESPONSE TO DECEMBER 17, 2001 OFFICE ACTION

Claims 1-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chen (US 4,812,956) in view of Shen (US 5,964,518) and Kopenhaver (US 3,775,828). In response, claim 2 has been canceled, new claim 29 has been added, and arguments are presented in traverse of the rejection of claim 1 and dependent claims 3 through 12.

New Claim 29

On the same day that the present Application was filed, February 15, 2001, this Applicant filed Application Serial No. 09/784,776, for "Decorative Light Plug" (the '776 Application). By amendment, cross-reference is made to that application, and its disclosure is incorporated herein by reference. Such incorporation is proper as the filing dates are the same, no claim to priority is made, and the structure disclosed is the same.

With reference to Figures 1 and 2 of the present Application, and Figure 1 of the '776 Application, a pair of keys (22 on Fig. 1 '776 App.) is shown formed on opposite sides of an outer periphery of the distal end of the first adapter (also present but unnumbered in Figures 1 and 2 of the present Application). The pair of keys are to insert into a pair of keyways defined to

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correspond to the pair of keys. As disclosed in the '776 Application, a pair of L-shaped keyways are used in a rotatable cover, which corresponds to plug (4) in the present Application. As will be apparent to those skilled in the art with reference to these disclosures, in an embodiment where the keys are present, the inside of the second cover (22) inherently must also have a pair of keyways to correspond to the pair of keys. The keyways on the second cover must necessarily be straight, since the prongs (212) when inserted into plated holes (112) would prevent rotation of the second cover.

New claim 29 adds the pair of keys and corresponding keyways to claim this embodiment. Neither Chen (US 4,812,956), Shen (US 5,964,518), nor Kopenhaver (US 3,775,828), alone nor in combination, disclose a pair of keys and corresponding keyways, and claim 13 is patentable over these references.

Argument in Traverse of Claim 1, 3-12 Rejections

Claim 1, and by dependence each of claims 3 through 12, claims a collar "slidably mounted around the first adapter." The cited art, Chen, Shen and Kopenhaver, neither alone nor in combination, disclose this limitation. Therefore, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of claim 1, and requests the withdrawal of the rejection. Since dependent claims 3 through 12 will then depend upon an allowed claim, withdrawal of the rejection of those claims is also requested.

INTERFERENCE UNDER 37 C.F.R. 1.607

Claims 13 through 20 are copied verbatim from U.S. Patent No. 6,379,190 B1 granted April 30, 2002, to Prazoff, and claims 21 through 28 are copied substantially from that patent.

The correspondence between the Prazoff patent claims and those now in this application is as follows. The order is not identical to the order of claims in Prazoff, since Prazoff contains claims which depend from a dependent claim that are separated by a claim that does not also depend from said dependent claim.

Prazoff Claim	Verbatim Copy	Substantial Copy
1	13	21
2	17	25

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Prazoff Claim	Verbatim Copy	Substantial Copy
3	15	23
4	19	27
5	14	22
6	18	26
7	16	24
8	20	28

For convenience, here is the correspondence of the Prazoff patent claims and those now in this application:

This Application	Prazoff
13	1, verbatim
14	5, verbatim
15	3, verbatim
16	7, verbatim
17	2, verbatim
18	6, verbatim
19	4, verbatim
20	8, verbatim
21	1, substantial copy
22	5, substantial copy
23	3, substantial copy
24	7, substantial copy
25	2, substantial copy
26	6, substantial copy
27	4, substantial copy

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This Application	Prazoff
28	8, substantial copy

In accordance with 1.607(a), the copied claims may be specifically applied to Applicant's disclosure as follows:

Copied Claim 13 (Prazoff claim 1)	Applicant's Disclosure
1. A <u>ropelight connector</u> for connecting a first ropelight with a second ropelight, comprising:	Decorative light connector, page 3, line 15. Primary objective includes: "the connection of the decorative light with another decorative light." Page 2, line 20. "the use may use the first adapter (1) of one decorative light to connect to the second cover adapter (2) of another decorative light." Page 4, lines 23-24.
a <u>first connecting member</u>	First adapter 1 with male-female connector 11 and resilient cover 12; page 3, line 17 - page 4, line 5.
having a <u>first member head portion</u>	Male-female connector 11; page 3, lines 20-23:
and a <u>first member tail portion</u>	Two first pins 111; page 3, line 21
<u>affixed</u> to an end of said first ropelight	"the <u>joint</u> between the combination male-female connector (11) and the enclosure (10) with the two first pins (111) inserted into the corresponding first plated holes (101). Page 3, line 23 - page 4, line 1; and figure 2.
Wherein a <u>pair of parallel locking sockets</u> is longitudinally formed on said first member head portion	Two plated <u>second holes</u> 112 on formed in the other end of male-female connector 11; page 3, line 22; figures 1 and 2.
and a <u>pair of tubular conductor</u> , which are electrically extended from a pair of wires inside said first ropelight respectively,	<u>Plated</u> second holes 112; the <u>plating</u> on the second holes form the tubular conductor which are connected through the two first pins (111) and two first plated holes (101) to the light sources (100); page 3, lines 17 - page 4, line 1. Claim 1: the first pins are "electrically connected with the multiple light sources inside the enclosure" page 6, lines 5-6
outwardly protruded from said first member head portion along said locking sockets	The use of the adjective "plated" means that the plating on the second holes 112 is on and along

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Copied Claim 13 (Prazoff claim 1)	Applicant's Disclosure
respectively;	the second holes [locking sockets].
a <u>second connecting member</u> ,	Second adapter 2 with male connector 21 and second cover 22; page 4, lines 6-12.
having a <u>second member head portion</u> ,	Male connector 21; page 4, lines 6- 10.
and a <u>second member tail portion</u>	Two second pins 211; page 4, lines 7-10.
<u>affixed to an end of said second ropelight</u>	Joint; page 4, line 9.
comprising a <u>tubular shelter frame</u> coaxially extended from said second member head portion	Second cover 22; page 4, lines 9-12.
Wherein a pair of <u>conductive terminals</u> ,	Two extended prongs 212; page 4, line 8.
which are <u>electrically connected</u> to a pair of wires inside said second ropelight,	Two extended prongs 212 are " <u>electrically connected</u> " with two second pins 211 which are electrically connected with the light sources 100 inside the enclosure 10. Page 4, lines 7-10.
are outwardly <u>extended</u> from said second member head portion	<u>Extended</u> prongs 212; figure 3.
and adapted for <u>fittingly inserting</u> into said locking sockets to engage with said tubular conductors respectively for securely connecting said second connecting member with said first connecting member,	Extended prongs 212 are inserted into the corresponding second plated holes 112. Page 5, lines 1-2.
so as to electrically connecting said first and second ropelights together; and	"another decorative light so that the total length of the decorative light is lengthened." Page 5, lines 3-4. "when the user wants to extend the total length of the decorative light, the use may use the first adapter (1) of one decorative light to connect to the second cover (2) of another decorative light." Page 4, line 22-24.
a <u>locking means</u> comprising a sleeve locker slidably wearing on said first connecting member	Collar 3; page 5, line 22. "collar is slidably moveable on the decorative light." Page 5, line 18.
and a <u>ring-shaped stopper</u>	Flange 121; Page 5, lines 19-20.
For blocking	"To prevent the collar from detachment from the decorative light, the first adapter (1) has a flange (121)." Page 5, line 18-20
an <u>inwardly projected end shoulder</u> of said sleeve locker	The "inner diameter of the collar (3) is larger than that of the first cover (12)", such that a

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Copied Claim 13 (Prazoff claim 1)	Applicant's Disclosure
	gap (not numbered) is defined between the first cover (12) and the collar (3), page 4, line 21-22, but at the same time the collar must be able to slide over the flange to engage the threads, demonstrating that there must be an inwardly projected end shoulder to engage the flange and prevent the collar from detachment from the decorative light.
in such a <u>slidably movable</u> manner along said first connecting member,	"collar is slidably moveable on the decorative light." Page 5, line 18.
Wherein said sleeve locker, which has a <u>diameter slightly larger than a diameter of said tubular shelter,</u>	Through hole (31) defined to allow the extension of the second cover (22). Page 4, lines 13-14.
has an <u>inner threaded portion</u> for screwing with	inner thread 32; page 4, line 14.
an <u>outer threaded portion</u> of said tubular shelter,	thread 221 on the second cover 22; page 4, line 15.
so as to fasten said first connecting member with said second connecting member.	Page 4, line 23-24.

Copied Claim 14 (Prazoff claim 5)	Applicant's Disclosure
14. A ropelight connector, as recited in claim 13, wherein said locking sockets are elongated locking sockets and said conductive terminals are rod-like conductive terminals having a size fittingly inserting into said locking sockets respectively.	<u>Plated</u> second holes 112; the <u>plating</u> on the second holes form the tubular conductor which are through the two first pins (111) and two first plated holes (101) to the light sources (100); page 3, lines 17 - page 4, line 1.

Copied Claim 15 (Prazoff claim 3)	Applicant's Disclosure
15. A ropelight connector, as recited in claim 13, wherein said tubular shelter is integrally extended from said second member head portion of said second connecting member and encircling said conductive terminals for protecting thereof, wherein said tubular shelter has a diameter slightly larger than a diameter of said first member head portion for fittingly receiving said first member head portion therein.	Page 4, line 21.

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Copied Claim 16 (Prazoff claim 7)	Applicant's Disclosure
16. A ropelight connector, as recited in claim 15, wherein said locking sockets are elongated locking sockets and said conductive terminals are rod-like conductive terminals having a size fittingly inserting into said locking sockets respectively.	Page 4, line 21, and <u>plated</u> second holes 112; the <u>plating</u> on the second holes form the tubular conductor which are connected through the two first pins (111) and two first plated holes (101) to the light sources (100); page 3, lines 17 - page 4, line 1.

Copied Claim 17 (Prazoff claim 2)	Applicant's Disclosure
17. A ropelight connector, as recited in claim 13, wherein said first member tail portion of said first connecting member and said second member tail portion of said second connecting member are respectively tubular holders, each of which having a diameter slightly larger than a diameter of said respective ropelight, wherein said tubular holders are securely affixed to said ends of said first and second ropelights in such an air tight manner, so as to permanently connect said first connecting member and said second connecting member to said first ropelight and said second ropelight respectively.	Figures, and page 4, lines 1-5, disclosing injection-moulding.

Copied Claim 18 (Prazoff claim 6)	Applicant's Disclosure
18. A ropelight connector, as recited in claim 17, wherein said locking sockets are elongated locking sockets and said conductive terminals are rod-like conductive terminals having a size fittingly inserting into said locking sockets respectively.	Figures, and page 4, lines 1-5, disclosing injection-moulding, <u>plated</u> second holes 112; the <u>plating</u> on the second holes form the tubular conductor which are connected through the two first pins (111) and two first plated holes (101) to the light sources (100); page 3, lines 17 - page 4, line 1.

Copied Claim 19 (Prazoff claim 4)	Applicant's Disclosure
19. A ropelight connector, as recited in claim 17, wherein said tubular shelter is integrally extended from said second member head portion of said second connecting member and	Page 4, line 21.

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Copied Claim 19 (Prazoff claim 4)	Applicant's Disclosure
encircling said conductive terminals for protecting thereof, wherein said tubular shelter has a diameter slightly larger than a diameter of said first member head portion for fittingly receiving said first member head portion therein.	

Copied Claim 20 (Prazoff claim 8)	Applicant's Disclosure
20. A ropelight connector, as recited in claim 19, wherein said locking sockets are elongated locking sockets and said conductive terminals are rod-like conductive terminals having a size fittingly inserting into said locking sockets respectively.	<u>Plated</u> second holes 112; the <u>plating</u> on the second holes form the tubular conductor which are through the two first pins (111) and two first plated holes (101) to the light sources (100); page 3, lines 17 - page 4, line 1.

Applying a two-way patentability analysis, *Winter v. Fujita*, 53 USPQ2d 1234, 1243 (BPAI 1999), *reh'g denied*, 53 USPQ2d 1478 (BPAI 2000):

Applicant's Claim 1	Prazoff Disclosure
1. A connector for a decorative light having multiple light sources connected in series and encased in a resilient and transparent enclosure, the connector comprising:	Col. 1, lines 6-9.
a first adapter adapted to be engaged with the enclosure	First connecting member 30
and having a combination male-female connector provided with two first pins adapted to be electrically connected with the multiple light sources inside the enclosure and two plated holes	The connection between tubular conductors 34 and pair of wires 11
and a resilient first cover formed outside a joint between the combination male-female connector and the enclosure;	First member head portion 31 and first member tail portion 32
a second adapter adapted to be engaged with the enclosure	Second connecting member 40
and having a male connector provided with two second pins adapted to be electrically	The connection between pair of conductive terminals 44 and pair of wires 21

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Applicant's Claim 1	Prazoff Disclosure
connected with the light sources inside the enclosure,	
two extended prongs electrically connected with the two second pins	pair of conductive terminals 44
and a second cover integrally formed on a joint between the male connector and the enclosure;	Second member head portion 41 and second member tail portion 42
and a collar	Ring shaped sleeve locker 51
Slidably mounted around the first adapter	Col. 4, line 4.
and having a through hole defined to allow the extension of the second cover	Figure 2
and an inner thread	Inner threaded portion 511
Formed to correspond to an outer thread on the second cover.	Outer threaded portion 421

PROPOSED COUNT ONE

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.607(a)(1), Applicant presents the following proposed count 1:

1. A ropelight connector for connecting a first ropelight with a second ropelight, comprising:

a first connecting member having a first member head portion and a first member tail portion affixed to an end of said first ropelight wherein a pair of parallel locking sockets is longitudinally formed on said first member head portion and a pair of tubular conductor, which are electrically extended from a pair of wires inside said first ropelight respectively, outwardly protruded from said first member head portion along said locking sockets respectively;

a second connecting member, having a second member head portion and a second member tail portion affixed to an end of said second ropelight, comprising a tubular shelter frame coaxially extended from said second member head portion wherein a pair of conductive terminals, which are electrically connected to a pair of wires inside said second ropelight, are outwardly extended from said second member head portion and adapted for fittingly inserting into said locking sockets

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to engage with said tubular conductors respectively for securely connecting said second connecting member with said first connecting member, so as to electrically connecting said first and second ropelights together; and

a locking means comprising a sleeve locker slidably wearing on said first connecting member and a ring-shaped stopper for blocking an inwardly projected end shoulder of said sleeve locker in such a slidably movable manner along said first connecting member, wherein said sleeve locker, which has a diameter slightly larger than a diameter of said tubular shelter, has an inner threaded portion for screwing with an outer threaded portion of said tubular shelter, so as to fasten said first connecting member with said second connecting member.

This proposed Count One corresponds to Applicant's independent claims 1, 13, and 21, and dependent claims 3-12, 14-20, and 22-28. This proposed count corresponds to all of Prazoff's claims.

New claim 29 claims subject matter outside the interference, and does not correspond to Count One.

Because the subject Application was filed February 15, 2001, which is less than three months after the application that matured into Pat. No. 6,379,190 B1 was filed on November 17, 2000, no submission under 37 C.F.R. § 1.608(b) is required.

37 C.F.R. § 1.608(a) STATEMENT

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.608(a), the undersigned attorney of record states that there is a basis upon which the Applicant is entitled to a judgment relative to the patentee of the '190 Patent.

35 U.S.C. § 135(b) COMPLIANCE

Since this amendment is being filed less than two months after issuance of the target patent, 35 U.S.C. § 135(b) is not relevant.

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CONCLUSION

Entry of this amendment is respectfully requested. For the reasons stated above, the Applicant respectfully submits that pending claim 29 claims allowable subject matter and allowance of such claim is earnestly solicited.

As to pending claims 1 and 3 through 28, an interference should be declared for the reasons shown above. Applicant's invention as recited in claims 1 and 3 through 28 and Prazoff's invention as recited in his claims 1 through 8 are drawn to the same patentable invention, 37 C.F.R. § 1.601(n) and *Moore v. McGrew*, 170 USPQ 149 (POBI 1971), under either a one-way or two-way analysis.

If there remain any issues that can be resolved by telephone with the Applicant's representative, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned directly.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Version with markings to show changes made."

A Petition for Three Month Extension with fee, A Request for Continued Examination with fee, and a Fee Transmittal for fees due for extra claims, accompany this submission. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of any such fees and credit overpayments associated with this communication to Deposit Account No. 19-2090.

Respectfully submitted,
SHELDON & MAK PC

Date: 6-17-02

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

Claim 2 has been canceled.

Claims 13 through 29 are new to this application and have been added as shown above.

A new paragraph has been inserted into the Specification on page 1, line 2.

The change to the Specification is as follows:

In the Specification, on page 4, line 13 to page 5, line 5:

With reference to Fig. 1, the collar (3) has a through hole (31) defined to allow the extension of the second cover (22) and has an inner thread (32) formed to correspond to the thread (221) on the second cover (22) of another decorative light, such that the collar (3) is able to screw onto the second cover (22) of another decorative light. It is noted that the axial depth of the thread (221) on the second cover (22) is only half of the axial depth of the inner threading (32) of the collar (3) and the collar is slidably movable on the decorative light. To prevent the collar from detachment from the decorative light, the first adapter (1) has a flange (121), as shown in Figs. 1 and 2, formed on an outer periphery of the first cover (12). The inner diameter of the collar (3) is large than that of the first cover (12), such that a gap (not numbered) is defined between the first cover (12) and the collar (3). Therefore, when the user wants to extend the total length of the decorative light, the user may use the first adapter (1) of one decorative light to connect to the second cover adapter (2) of another decorative light. After the extended ~~screws~~ *prongs* (212) of the male connector (21) ^{of another decorative light} are inserted into the corresponding second plated hole (112) of the first adapter (1), the collar (3) is able to screw onto the outer thread (221) of another decorative light so that the total length of the decorative light is lengthened.